



BC Centre for Disease Control
An agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority

Provincial TB Services
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Communicable Disease Control Manual

Chapter 4: Tuberculosis

Appendix C: Collection of Specimens for TB Testing



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APPENDIX C: COLLECTION OF SPECIMENS FOR TB TESTING

To access information about specimen collection, handling and transport instructions, or ordering, submitting and processing information of specimens for Mycobacteriology examination, contact BCCDC Public Health Laboratory (BCCDC PHL) Mycobacteriology/TB laboratory at 604-707-2630 or review the [eLab Handbook](#).

The [PHSA Mycobacteriology/TB Requisition](#) forms can be found in the [eLab Handbook](#).

Below are instructions on how to search the eLab Handbook for Mycobacteriology-specific information:

The screenshot shows the eLab Handbook interface. At the top left is the BC Centre for Disease Control logo. The main navigation bar includes 'Home', 'Tests', and 'Log off / Sign In As Different User'. On the right, there is an 'LM LABS' logo. The search bar on the left contains 'mycobacterium' with a red circle '2' over the 'Go' button. Below the search bar are radio buttons for 'Name(s)', 'Anywhere', 'Start', and 'Exact', and a 'Reset' button. The main content area shows 'Welcome to eLab Handbook' with a red circle '1' over the 'Choose your home lab' dropdown menu. Below this, it lists 'Available test information' for Lower Mainland Labs (LM Labs), including BC Children's & Women's Hospital Laboratory and BC Centre for Disease Control Public Health Laboratory. At the bottom, a table shows search results with a red circle '3' over the 'Total records returned: 7' text.

Total records returned: 7

Lab	Test Name	Division	Section	Last Changed
BCCDC	Tuberculosis Interferon Gamma Release Assays	Zoonotic Diseases and Emerging Pathogens	Not Assigned	23-Jul-19
BCCDC	MIRU VNTR	Mycobacteriology/TB	Not Assigned	07-Jun-19
BCCDC	Mycobacterium tuberculosis complex NAT (TB NAT), Mycobacterium avium complex NAT (MAC NAT)	Mycobacteriology/TB	Not Assigned	05-Mar-19
BCCDC	Mycobacteria tuberculosis Sputum Smear and Culture	Mycobacteriology/TB	Not Assigned	31-May-18
BCCDC	Mycobacterium tuberculosis Non-Sputum Smear and Culture	Mycobacteriology/TB	Not Assigned	31-May-18
BCCDC	Mycobacteria Culture Identification	Mycobacteriology/TB	Not Assigned	31-May-18
BCCDC	Leprosy	Mycobacteriology/TB	Not Assigned	12-Mar-18



No.	Field	Instruction
1	Choose your home lab	Select "BCCDC Public Health Laboratory" from drop-down menu
2	SEARCH FOR TEST	Type "mycobacterium" and select "Go"
3	Test Name	Choose appropriate test from records returned

For consultation or discussion of specific laboratory tests or results, the TB Nurse Consultants can be contacted regarding sputum specimen collection, at 604-707-5678. Questions regarding the collection of all other specimens can be directed to the BCCDC PHL at 604-707-2630.

REQUIREMENTS FOR COLLECTION

- **All** specimens must be submitted in sterile, screw-cap leak-proof containers. Ensure that the specimen container is tightly closed. **Leaking specimens will not be processed.** Do not use caps containing cardboard liners (will soak up the specimen).
- Specimen containers must be labeled legibly.
- Submit one specimen container **per** biohazard bag. Each bag must contain a requisition in the **side pocket** that includes **two** patient identifiers (e.g., full name, date of birth) that are **identical** to the patient information on the specimen container. If possible, provide a brief summary of patient history and findings on the laboratory requisition. This information may be important for the assessment of significance of [nontuberculous mycobacteria \(NTM\)](#) isolates.
- Specimens for mycobacterial culture must not be submitted in alcohol, formalin, or other preservative.
- When specimens are sent for histopathology examination, at least one additional specimen should be collected/submitted appropriately for mycobacterial culture (i.e., not submitted in alcohol, formalin, or other preservative).
- Gastric lavage fluid, lymph node or other tissue biopsy samples, sputum or urine specimens should be refrigerated at 4°C (except blood culture and cerebrospinal fluid specimens) before and during transport to the laboratory.
- Specimens or samples suspected of containing *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* must be transported as **Category B, Type P650** packaging. Refer to regulations for [Transport of Dangerous Goods](#).